

October 24, 2008

Mr. Gregory Hall
Goaling Process manager
U.S. Small Business Administration
409 3rd Street, SW.
Washington, DC 20416

Dear Gregory:

Per your e-mail of October 16th, 2008, we have revised our response to question 1. The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) is pleased to provide the enclosed information in response to the memorandum from SBA dated January 10, 2008, regarding submission, processing, and evaluation of Small Business Procurement Scorecard reports.

Please be assured of GSA's continued commitment to helping small businesses participate in the federal government's procurement process. Please contact me at (202) 501-1021 to further discuss GSA's goals and small business efforts.

Sincerely,

Michael Rigas
Associate Administrator
Office of Small Business Utilization

Enclosures

Evaluation Measure #1 (First Scorecard – Plan)

Implemented a strategic plan to increase the value of competitively awarded contracts to small businesses during the period.

As GSA's small business advocate, the Office of Small Business Utilization's (OSBU) mission is to engage in strategies that provide contracting opportunities in government procurement for small, small disadvantaged, women-owned, veteran-owned, service-disabled veteran-owned, and HUBZone businesses as mandated by law, executive order and/or regulation. The GSA OSBU works with each of the buying activities within GSA to identify contracting opportunities for small businesses. We provide direction, managerial oversight, and training to regional small business centers and GSA buying activities to maximize the number of opportunities small businesses can participate in, both as prime contractors and as subcontractors.

GSA also conducts hundreds of outreach events each year and will continue to in FY 2009 to increase the number of small business that receive contracts. In addition, GSA OSBU conducts workshops on "How to Market Your GSA Schedule Contract" so small businesses will have the information necessary to increase the value and number of contracts awarded, and will continue this very successful program in FY 2009. GSA also conducts workshops on "How to get a GSA Schedules Contract" at various locations throughout the country on a monthly basis.

GSA OSBU has developed a national consolidated calendar of events and publishes this calendar monthly on the OSBU website, allowing any interested party to view upcoming events of interest within their geographic area. This calendar lists the name of the event, location, date, and a point of contact within GSA for all small business events nationwide. Consistent with previous outreach activities, GSA plans to have 250 to 300 such events in FY 2009. The calendar of events can be viewed at <http://www.gsa.gov/sbu> and is updated on a monthly basis. The link to the calendar is located on the right hand side of the site, listed under "GSA Events."

OSBU runs quarterly reports using data from the Federal Procurement Data System – Next Generation (FPDS-NG) to ensure that the agency is on track to meet its goals. These reports track the overall small business goals as well as the socio-economic goals.

GSA has small business offices in every region throughout the country where small businesses can go to get counseling on doing business with the Federal government. GSA's regional small business offices are involved in the procurement process from the beginning, working with program staff ensure maximum participation of small businesses.

GSA's Small Business Technical Advisors within the Public Buildings Service and the Federal Acquisition Service review acquisition plans and the subcontracting plans for

their respective organizations. GSA regional small business staff members perform this function within the regions.

Evaluation Measure #2 (First Scorecard – Plan)

Demonstrated top-level Agency commitment to small business contracting during the period.

Commitment to small business contracting comes from the top at the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA). The Administrator regularly speaks at small business events and will continue to do so during the period. The Associate Administrator of the GSA Office of Small Business Utilization regularly attends senior staff meetings. GSA's Regional Administrators and other top-level management have also supported and will continue to support the agency's efforts to assist small businesses in contracting with GSA and the federal government.

Achieving the small business procurement goals are a portion of each Regional Administrator's performance evaluation. This commitment is demonstrated in their active participation in outreach events targeted to the small business community. In addition, top-level managers at GSA continue to seek innovative ways to improve and enhance the procurement process at GSA for small businesses. Each regional office has appointed a Regional Acquisition Executive. GSA's Chief of Staff was designated GSA's Senior Agency Official responsible for implementing Executive Order 13360, which mandates that agencies take an active role in promoting contracting with service disabled veteran-owned small businesses. In this role, he has spearheaded the 21 Gun Salute, GSA's action plan to meet and exceed its three percent contracting goal with our nations service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses. As part of this initiative, meeting GSA's small business goals is part of the performance plan of every senior executive in the agency. Regional Administrators meet quarterly with regional small business offices to review small business issues and discuss the region's progress in meeting socioeconomic small business goals. GSA's acquisition policy leaders have issued guidance to all contracting personnel on meeting socioeconomic and small business contracting goals.

The Associate Administrator of the GSA Office of Small Business Utilization also participates in the Small Business Procurement Advisory Committee meetings hosted by SBA. The OSBU also serves on the planning committee for the Annual Veterans Small Business Conference that has been held in Las Vegas, NV and will continue to do so. GSA is also a sponsoring agency of many small business conferences held throughout the nation.

Evaluation Measure #3 (First Scorecard – Plan)

Planned significant events to increase small business participation in the procurement process during the period.

GSA has a high level of outreach activity that maximizes awareness of GSA as a partner to small businesses in contracting with the entire federal government as well as our agency. Where possible, GSA focuses outreach activities on particular socioeconomic categories where the agency is farthest from meeting target goals. We have successful nationwide seminars for small businesses that focus on the process for obtaining a Multiple Award Schedule contract and marketing strategies. These seminars are held on a regular basis in our national and regional offices. GSA will continue to co-sponsor and be an active participant in conferences, trade fairs, and matchmaking nationwide with members of Congress, SBA, and other Federal Government agencies, trade associations, and professional organizations. We will continue support congressional procurement fairs to highlight GSA opportunities and attend events held by groups advocating for small business procurement. GSA will continue to partner with local and national chambers of commerce to provide assistance and guidance to small businesses interested in contracting with GSA.

GSA OSBU has a national consolidated calendar of events on the OSBU website, allowing any interested party to view upcoming events of interest. The calendar of events is currently listing a multitude of events scheduled in fiscal year 2009. This calendar is updated monthly and will include upcoming events in FY 2009 as they are continuously being scheduled as the year progresses. Consistent with our current outreach activities, GSA plans to have 250 to 300 such events in FY 2009. This calendar lists the name of the event, location, date, and a point of contact within GSA. The calendar of events can be viewed at <http://www.gsa.gov/sbu>. The link to the calendar is located on the right hand side of the site, listed under "GSA Events."

Evaluation Measure #4 (First Scorecard – Plan)

Demonstrates that small business data is accurately reported in FPDS-NG during the period.

GSA recently conducted an effort to validate and verify the data it entered into FPDS-NG during FY 2007, for all the FPDS data elements, and found over 99 percent accuracy in the small business data.

GSA has implemented the OFPP memo dated March 9, 2007, tasking federal agencies to establish a process to ensure FPDS data is accurate, through GSA Acquisition Letter V-07-03 instructing all GSA contracting officials on the steps to take to verify FPDS-NG data integrity through quarterly certification.

GSA is now preparing a detailed plan to review the data it enters into FPDS, not just as an annual review, but on a quarterly basis, working toward the next annual report. Our approach is that if we check for data quality on a more frequent basis, we will more likely improve our data quality performance. GSA has also hired a data quality engineer to supplement the federal database administrator and is using a statistician guided sampling methodology so results are reliable and actionable.

That plan will put into place strong safeguards for data quality for all the data elements. We are pleased that small business data scored very high in accuracy thus far.

Evaluation Measure #5 (First Scorecard – Plan)

Demonstrates that policies and procedures are in place to ensure compliance with subcontracting plans and attainment of subcontracting goals during the period.

The General Services Administration (GSA) utilizes the Electronic Subcontracting Reporting System (eSRS) to manage compliance with subcontracting goals and to ensure attainment of subcontracting goals. The Individual Subcontracting Reports (ISR) are monitored for compliance by GSA's Contracting Officers nationwide along with the Regional and Central Small Business Technical Advisors (SBTAs). The eSRS allows these individuals to more easily summarize data to pinpoint which contractors are meeting or exceeding their goals. In addition, the eSRS is designed to e-mail contractors when their reports are delinquent. Automating these reports ensures the latest editions of required information. The Summary Subcontract Report (SSR) is also monitored for compliance nationwide.

Training for eSRS is provided by the Agency Coordinator, an OSBU staff member, for Government employees or the Small Business Administration's (SBA) Commercial Market Representative (CMR) for prime contractors. All training manuals are listed on the eSRS Homepage for assistance.

On April 22, 2008, an Interim Rule was published in the Federal Register, Case 2005-040, requesting comments on FAR Part 19 and clauses at FAR-52.212-5, FAR 52.219-9, FAR 52.219-25 that will enable the Agency to more effectively manage the Subcontracting Program. To date, the comments have not been finalized.

Evaluation Measure #6 (First Scorecard – Plan)

Demonstrated no unjustified bundling has taken place during the period.

GSA has procedures in place to ensure that no unjustified contract bundling occurs. All bundled contracts must be reviewed by the Office of Small Business Utilization and approved by the Associate Administrator for Small Business Utilization.

GSA's involves the service/regional Small Business Technical Advisors in the acquisition planning process to ensure maximum practicable opportunity for small business participation. Should a contract be deemed necessary for bundling, the benefits must be measurably substantial as outlined in FAR 7.107(b). The SBTA will forward any bundling requests to OSBU for review. OSBU will review and ensure maximum participation by small business.

Based on GSA's rigorous review policy and training program, GSA has not issued any unjustified bundled contracts. These policies and procedures, as well as the close collaboration between GSA's small business team and it's contracting workforce will continue through FY 2009.

Evaluation Measure #7 (First Scorecard – Plan)

Planned training to contracting staff/managers in executing small business/socioeconomic procurements during the period.

GSA also provides internal training for acquisition staff on the proper steps necessary to conduct electronic market research by locating small business concerns in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) system. During acquisition planning, contracting officers and acquisition staff are to consider the various small business programs as prospective sources of supplies or services that can meet the need in accordance with the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR). They also review all large procurements to reduce instances of contract bundling.

GSA OSBU plans to conduct training of contracting staff at GSA Expo in June 2009. GSA also conducts periodic training of contracting staff throughout the year as required/requested by the contracting offices. Training is conducted through the use of in person classroom training. OSBU is currently developing online training modules for use in training contracting staff nationwide using the GSA online university.

The Office of the Chief Acquisition Officer will conduct a major training conference in October 2008 to train GSA's contracting staff on the tools that they have available to meet GSA's small business goals.

Evaluation Measure #8 (First Scorecard – Plan)

Planned to collaborate with SBA on formulation of small business procurement policy initiatives during the period.

GSA is a participating agency on the Small Business Procurement Advisory Council (SBPAC). GSA also is a member of the Executive Committee of the SBPAC. GSA senior leadership and small business staff communicate regularly with SBA on small business procurement policy initiatives. GSA staff meets with SBA to discuss procurement concerns and other issues of importance to small businesses and plans to continue to do so to build on the successful collaborative relationship GSA has with SBA.

Evaluation Measure #9 (First Scorecard – Plan)

Agency submits all strategic plans and reports that became due to SBA during the reporting period.

GSA plans to send the following reports or plans to the Small Business Administration by the due dates listed below. The GSA Office of Small Business Utilization is maintaining the below checklist to ensure the timely submission of its reports.

GSA REPORTS/PLANS CHECKLIST		
REPORT NAME	SCHEDULE	Complete? (Y/N)
Competitive Demonstration Program Report	Competitive Demonstration Program Report will be forwarded to SBA Goaling Manager by January 31st	
Annual Report and Fiscal Year Update for Strategic Plan to Contract with Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSB)	SDVOSB Report will be forwarded to SBA Goaling Manager by January 31st	
Annual Contract Bundling Report	Bundling Report will be forwarded to SBA Goaling Manager by January 31st	
Progress Report on Increasing Opportunities for Women-Owned Small Businesses	Progress Report will be forwarded to SBA Goaling Manager by August Scorecard (FY2009 Plan), January 31st Scorecard (FY2008 Progress)	Included with FY 2009 Plan
Corrective Actions to Address Unmet FY 2006 Socio-Economic Goals	Corrective Actions Report will be forwarded to SBA Goaling Manager by January 31st	